

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 5-25 are currently pending, Claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15-16, and 23-24 having been amended, and Claim 4 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. The changes and additions to the claims do not add new matter and are supported by the originally filed specification, for example, on previous Claim 4; page 18, lines 21-23; page 19, lines 6-8; and page 20, lines 1-6 .

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 10-14 and 23-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Imazu (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0087892) in view of Okamoto et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0073102, hereafter “Okamoto”); Claims 3-8 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Imazu in view of Okamoto and Aboulhosn et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0068524, hereafter “Aboulhosn”); Claims 9 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Imazu in view of Okamoto and Oho et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0184515, hereafter “Oho”); and Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Imazu in view of Okamoto, Bradee (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0095571) and Satyavolu et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0191964, hereafter “Satyavolu”).

With respect to the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment to Claim 1 overcomes this ground of rejection. Amended Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*,

transmitting, from a service utilizing apparatus, registration information to a management apparatus according to an external input, the registration information including a first user identification information for use in utilizing a service in the service utilizing apparatus together with a first password corresponding to the first user identification information, wherein the management apparatus stores second user identification information for

at least a second apparatus, and the first user identification information is set to be different than the second user identification information;

subsequently transmitting, from the service utilizing apparatus, a first apparatus name of the service utilizing apparatus to the management apparatus, the first apparatus name being selected by a user of the service utilizing apparatus and is selected independently of any apparatus names selected for the second apparatus such that the first apparatus name is allowed to be the same as an apparatus name selected for the second apparatus;

transmitting, from the service utilizing apparatus to the management apparatus, disclosure setting information indicating whether or not the existence of the service utilizing apparatus registered in the management apparatus is to be disclosed to other users.

Applicants respectfully submit that the applied art fails to disclose or suggest at least these features of amended Claim 1.

Imazu is directed to an authentication method and device. Fig. 1 of Imazu shows an authentication system 1 which includes a plurality of users (10A and 10B) connected to an information provider 20 and an authenticator 100 via the internet 30 (see para. [0043]). Authentication is required for a user to access certain services or information from the information provider (see para. [0046]). An ID is not determined by a user, but instead the authenticator 100 has a random number generator and allocates a random ID to a user based on a random number generated by the random number generator (see para. [0051]). The authenticator also includes a user management table 210 which includes various information about the user, including a “machine type of the cellular phone used” (see para. [0056]). The authenticator references the user management table to authenticate the user 10 when the user wants to access the authenticator (see para. [0057]). Fig. 2 shows a registration screen provided by the authenticator. Fig. 3 shows a log in screen provided by the authenticator in which a user enters an identifier and a password to access the authenticator (see also para. [0065]).

However, nowhere does Imazu describe that a user has a user ID which may not overlap with a user ID of another user, but can have an apparatus name which can overlap with the apparatus name of another user.

Additionally, Okamoto is directed to a digital data distribution system. Fig. 1 of Okamoto shows a system which includes a personal computer 103, an internet service provider 102, and a digital data distribution service firm 101. The distribution server includes a user administration database which stores user account information, user device information, and information of storage media that users have used in the past (see also Figs. 13-15).

However, Okamoto also fails to described that a user has a user ID which may not overlap with a user ID of another user, but can have an apparatus name which can overlap with the apparatus name of another user.

Therefore, Applicants submit that Imazu and Okamoto fail to disclose or suggest “transmitting, from a service utilizing apparatus, registration information to a management apparatus according to an external input, the registration information including a first user identification information for use in utilizing a service in the service utilizing apparatus together with a first password corresponding to the first user identification information, *wherein the management apparatus stores second user identification information for at least a second apparatus, and the first user identification information is set to be different than the second user identification information*; subsequently transmitting, from the service utilizing apparatus, a first apparatus name of the service utilizing apparatus to the management apparatus, *the first apparatus name being selected by a user of the service utilizing apparatus and is selected independently of any apparatus names selected for the second apparatus such that the first apparatus name is allowed to be the same as an apparatus name selected for the second apparatus*,” as defined by amended Claim 1.

Furthermore, Amended Claim 1 now recites “transmitting, from the service utilizing apparatus to the management apparatus, disclosure setting information indicating whether or not the existence of the service utilizing apparatus registered in the management apparatus is to be disclosed to other users.”

Applicants note that with respect to previous dependent Claim 4, the Office Action relies on Aboulhosn to disclose “transmitting, to the management apparatus, disclosure setting information indicating whether or not the first apparatus names of the service utilizing apparatuses registered in the management apparatus are to be published to the management apparatus.” (See Office Action, at page 8, citing para. [0016], lines 17-21).

Aboulhosn is directed to a peer-to-peer file sharing system for sharing files between a group of computer systems. The cited portion of Aboulhosn (para. [0016], lines 17-21) discloses that a group owner sends an invitation message and when a computer system receives an invitation request message, it can either accept or decline the invitation. If the invitation is accepted, the group owner adds the new member to its list of members for that group.

However, the above-cited portion of Aboulhosn has nothing to do with a user providing a setting to management apparatus which indicates whether the existence of a device owned by the user is to be disclosed to other users. On the contrary, Aboulhosn merely describes a new member joining a group which has existing members.

Therefore, Applicants submit that the combination of Imazu, Okamoto, and Aboulhosn fails to disclose or suggest “transmitting, from the service utilizing apparatus to the management apparatus, disclosure setting information indicating whether or not the existence of the service utilizing apparatus registered in the management apparatus is to be disclosed to other users,” as defined by amended Claim 1.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably distinguishes over Imazu, Okamoto, and Aboulhosn, either alone or in proper combination.

Oho, Bradee, and Satyavolu have been considered but fail to remedy the deficiencies of Imazu, Okamoto, and Aboulhosn with regard to amended Claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably distinguishes over Imazu, Okamoto, Aboulhosn, Oho, Bradee, and Satyavolu, either alone or in proper combination.

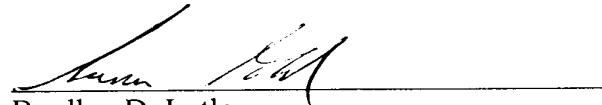
Amended independent Claims 10-12, 23 and 24 recite features similar to those of amended Claim 1 discussed above. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claims 10-12, 23 and 24 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably distinguish over Imazu, Okamoto, Aboulhosn, Oho, Bradee, and Satyavolu, either alone or in proper combination.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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